

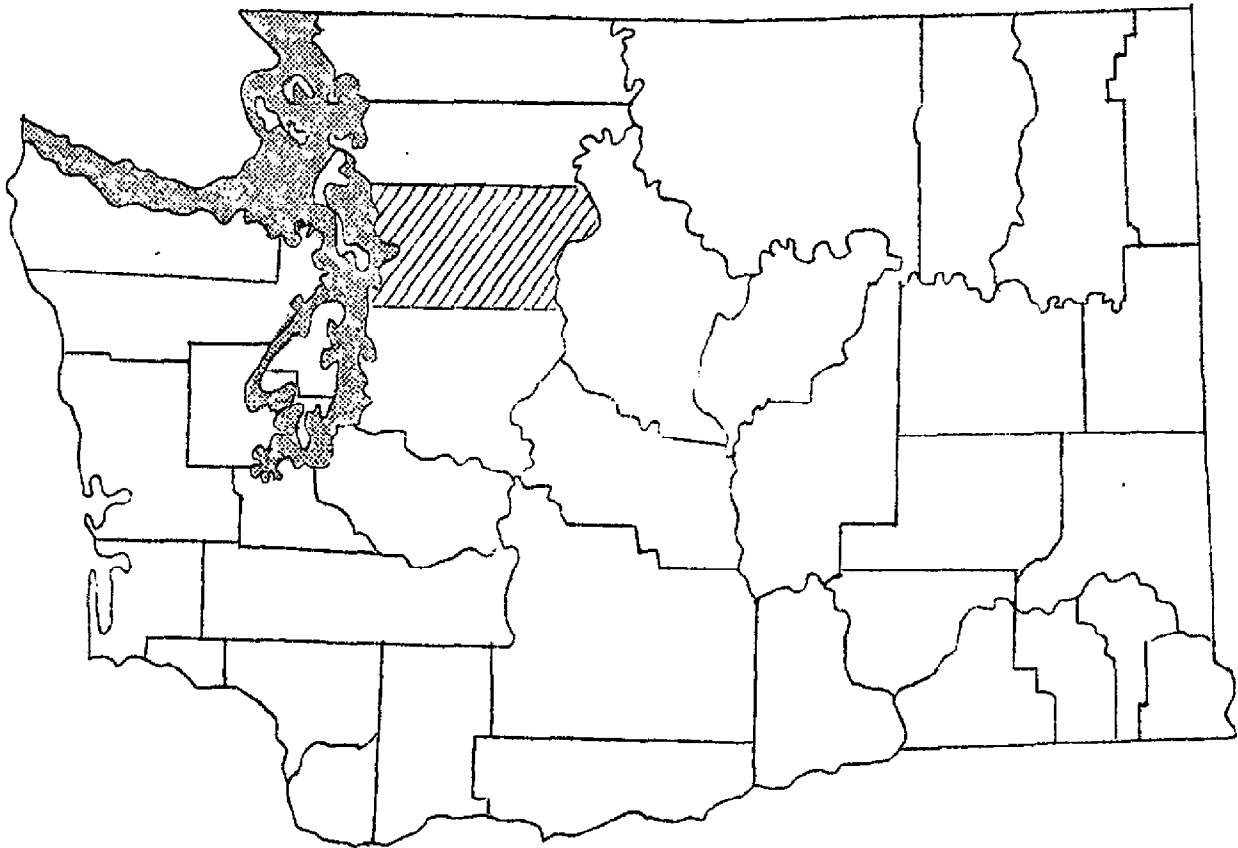
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# SNOHOMISH COUNTY AGRICULTURE WASHINGTON

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COUNTY AGRICULTURAL DATA SERIES  
1965



WASHINGTON STATE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
Donald W. Meos, Director

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
Statistical Reporting Service  
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WASHINGTON CROP AND LIVESTOCK REPORTING SERVICE  
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## FOREWORD

This bulletin on Snohomish County is one of a second edition series devoted to presenting the history and present nature of agriculture in each of the thirty-nine counties of the State of Washington. The original series was initiated in 1956 by the Washington State Department of Agriculture. State funds were matched by moneys from the United States Department of Agriculture under the Research and Marketing Act of 1946.

County agricultural data books are intended to serve a variety of needs. Continually changing conditions in a dynamic state such as Washington require constant planning by groups and individuals, especially in the field of marketing agricultural products. Knowledge of land resources, population and agricultural-economic trends in a local area such as Snohomish County is of great value. The book will be useful for reference in public and private instruction by social studies teachers. It has been devised also to inform adults interested in knowing more about their immediate area.

Selected geographic facts, agricultural history, population trends and statistical data are included to give an overall appreciation of Snohomish County. Enumerations of the United States Censuses of Population and Agriculture are summarized to give a perspective of development since the establishment of Snohomish County. Facts on topography, soil, climate and forest which influence farming are integrated from surveys and reports of government agencies. Estimates of leading crops by years since 1939 by the Washington Crop and Livestock Reporting Service provide a measure of the trend in the agriculture of the county farm industry.

Acknowledgment is accorded the professional work of several persons. Immediate direction was under Emery C. Wilcox, Agricultural Statistician in Charge, Field Operations Division, Statistical Reporting Service, United States Department of Agriculture. Research involved in up-dating and revising the original information and the preparation of the manuscript of the second edition of the Snohomish County bulletin were performed by George K. Saito, Research Analyst, Washington State Department of Agriculture. Editing of the first draft of the present bulletin was done by Emery C. Wilcox. Agricultural Statisticians of the Washington Crop and Livestock Reporting Service gave valuable assistance. Margaret B. Quiroga, Washington State Department of Agriculture, typed all of the textual and tabular material and prepared the graphs. The bulletins were reproduced and assembled by members of the clerical staff of the Washington Crop and Livestock Reporting Service.

Olympia, Washington  
October 1, 1965

Donald W. Moos, Director  
Washington State Department of Agriculture

Funds for this bulletin provided by the Washington State Department of Agriculture were matched by the United States Department of Agriculture under the Research and Marketing Act of 1946.

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## PART I

## HISTORY OF SNOHOMISH COUNTY AGRICULTURE

Introduction

Snohomish County is located in northern Washington extending from Puget Sound to the crest of the Cascade Range 70 miles eastward. Elevations climb from the Stanwood tideflats and deltas of the Snohomish and Stillaguamish Rivers at sea level to the 10,436 foot summit of Glacier Peak on the Cascade crest. Between these extremes lies a varied topography composed of river bottom; gently rolling foothills; level benchlands; narrow, deeply-cut canyons and numerous mountainous spurs of varying height and extent. The best agricultural lands in the county are in the Skykomish, Snohomish and Stillaguamish River Valleys.

With an area of 2,112 square miles (approximately 1,351,680 acres) Snohomish is thirteenth in size among the thirty-nine Washington counties. According to the latest Census of Agriculture (1959), about 11 percent of the county land area of 1,344,000 acres was in farms and about 3 percent was in harvested cropland. Some land, unsuited for crops because of existing forests and rugged topography, is still important as pasture. The area within Snohomish County has been settled by immigrants from eastern United States and Europe who were attracted by the climate and the rich resources of soils and timber. Immigration into the region also was prompted by early mineral discoveries. Typical of most counties on the Pacific Coast, Snohomish has grown steadily in population and in agricultural production along with the other economic activities. Today, most of the wealth of the county is based on forests and agricultural resources.

History 1/

The first white men to explore the area now occupied by Snohomish County were British led by Captain George Vancouver. The date was June 4, 1792 when Vancouver and his crew anchored off the present site of Everett. Vancouver named and placed on his charts many landmarks including Possession Sound, Port Gardner Bay and Port Susan.

The main Indian group which the British found in the area was the Snohomish. These Indians spoke the Coast Salish language as did most of the tribes in the Puget Sound region. The Indians had no form of agriculture and no domesticated

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animals other than the dog. They depended entirely on the natural fauna and flora of the land and waters, existing with simple methods and crude implements by hunting, fishing and by gathering berries and roots. The Snohomish were "canoe" Indians, dependent on their excellent canoes for fishing. The canoes were made of logs, some large enough to carry 40 persons. Salmon, the principal food supply, was taken by trolling and spearing. Much of it was cut, dried or smoked.

Among the first white men to approach the area by land were Catholic missionaries and fur traders employed by the Hudson's Bay Company. In their relationship with the whites, the Indians generally acted honorably and even hospitably. Some Indians adopted a little agriculture such as the growing of potatoes and the raising of horses.

Settlement by Americans did not begin until after the Treaty of 1846 which ended British territorial claims and established the present Canadian boundary. Some of the first Americans in the Snohomish Valley received aid from the Indians in getting established. Settlers took advantage of the Oregon Land Law and the Donation Land Act of 1850 which granted 320 acres to a single person or 640 acres to a married couple.

One of the most important treaties between the United States and the Salish tribes of Puget Sound was the Treaty of Point Elliot signed at Mukilteo in 1855. As a result of this treaty, American settlement was possible without dispute in most of the north Puget Sound region. It provided for the establishment of the Tulalip Indian Reservation in present western Snohomish County.

Logging, sawmilling and mining combined with part-time farming was basis of pioneer settlement. First American settlers were John Gould and Peter Goutre who built a sawmill on Tulalip Bay in 1853. The second settlement was Fort Ebey which was built by Territorial Volunteers under Colonel Isaac Ebey on the lower Snohomish River during the Indian War of 1855-1858, part of which took place around Puget Sound as well as in other parts of the Pacific Northwest. In 1858, some of the volunteers stationed at Fort Ebey moved to land claims in the Snohomish Valley and one of the first important settlements was at the site of the present community of Snohomish. Homesteads were filed at this location by E. C. Ferguson, Neil Barnes and E. T. Cady in 1859. The first permanent settlers at Everett and Marysville were Dennis Brigham and Edward Kramer in the late 1850's. As the valley lowlands along the Snohomish River were logged-over after 1860, numerous small farms were started. The Puget Mill Company, owner of large tracts of timber, sold numerous farm plots in the Snohomish and Stillaguamish Valleys.

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1/ This historical summary has been derived from four sources:

- (1) William Whitfield, History of Snohomish County, Washington, 1926.
- (2) Burton W. Adkinson, The Historical Geography of the Snohomish River. Thesis in geography, University of Washington,,1939.
- (3) Washington, A Guide to the Evergreen State. Writers' Program, Work Projects Administration. Sponsored by Washington State Historical Society. Published 1941.
- (4) Richard M. Perry, The Counties of Washington. Published by Secretary of State, Bureau of Statistics, State of Washington, Olympia, 1943.

The Washington Territorial Legislature established Snohomish County on January 14, 1861. It was formed from the mainland portion of older Island County and boundaries were established to include settlements in the Snohomish and Stillaguamish Valleys. The county was named after the Snohomish Indians and the river which also bears the name of this important tribe.

Logging, mining and homesteading spread eastward into the interior parts of the newly established county while the earlier settled western portion continued to develop. In 1866, Stanwood was founded by Robert Fulton as a trading post near the mouth of the Stillaguamish River. In following years, numerous Scandinavian and other settlers reclaimed farm lands from the marshes along the lower Stillaguamish. The Stillaguamish Valley around Arlington was settled during the late 1860's. Logging and part-time farming supported many of the new settlers in the valley. Pioneer farmers in the Arlington area were Henry Marshall, Willard Sly and G. O. Neville. During the 1890's, a mining boom in the mountainous sections of Snohomish County built up settlements at Darrington, Granite Falls, Sultan, Startup and Goldbar. Two large mining camps--Silverton and Monte Cristo--thrived and declined with the changing fortunes of mining.

Towards the end of the last century (1890-1900), industrial development centered at Everett in the lower Snohomish Valley greatly increased the area's population and farm production. In 1890, a group of land promoters began to plan Everett as a major lumber center. By 1893, Great Northern Railway's transcontinental line was completed to Everett giving further impetus to the economic development. Between 1893 and 1915, the Puget Sound Pulp and Paper Company, the Robinson Plywood and Timber Company, the Soundview Pulp Company and the Weyerhaeuser Timber Company all located mills in the vicinity of Everett. Industrial employment and abundance of good land in western Snohomish County attracted thousands of new immigrants from eastern United States and from Europe. Population of the county grew from around 600 in 1870 to 8,514 in 1890 and to 59,209 in 1910.

The growth of farming has been closely related to the area's industrial expansion. As the population increased, local markets for dairy and poultry products and crops became larger. Railways, roads and shipping built to haul forest products also served as a means of transporting farm products to state and national markets. Many farms were started by workers in logging camps and mills as part-time occupations. New farm lands were developed on logged-over areas which were sold at low prices.

Commercial farming in the county had its beginning during the 1870's with the sale of hay and grain to logging companies for oxen and horses. Logging camps and mill towns along the rivers and on Puget Sound also provided good markets for milk, butter, eggs, fresh meat, vegetables and potatoes. The gold rush in Alaska and the growing population of Seattle provided outlets for more produce during this period. Farms along the Snohomish River exported many products by river steamer to Seattle. Oats were hauled by vessel from Stanwood. Among the most valuable specialty cash crops of the Snohomish Valley in the 1880's and 1890's was hops, shipped to Seattle and San Francisco.

The county's important dairy industry began in the 1870's when Clark Ferguson started a dairy at Snohomish. William Bishop and U. B. Roberts at Snohomish and John Cochran at Marysville brought in good foundation herds of dairy cattle. Creameries were started at Snohomish in 1894 and at Stanwood and Monroe in 1895. Butter was shipped to Seattle for the Alaska trade. The Carnation Milk Company

bought the Stanwood Creamery in 1914 and a large condensery was built at Monroe around 1910. In 1917, the Snohomish County Dairymen's Association was established with W. G. Grimm as its first president. The association built up a large membership and bought plants at Snohomish, Arlington and Everett.

Specialized vegetable and berry farming in Snohomish County began in the area around Monroe and Snohomish during the 1920's. Noteworthy pioneer work was done by C. J. Stuart in berries at Monroe and by J. G. Robinson in lettuce and other truck crops at Snohomish. Specialty crop production increased greatly from 1940 to 1955 as canners and frozen food companies such as Stokely, Pictsweet, Cedar-green Frozen Pack, Snohomish County Berry Growers and Hershey Packing Company established processing plants in Snohomish, Monroe, Stanwood and East Stanwood.

The poultry industry in Snohomish County developed from individual farms independently selling eggs in baskets to a well-organized marketing system. Since 1920, poultry farmers in the county have sold eggs to a statewide and national market. More recently established packing plants in Everett, Stanwood, Snohomish and Monroe have provided new freezer markets for chickens and turkeys.

In the last 100 years, Snohomish County has grown from a few pioneer clearings to an area important in agricultural and forest products. In the present century, the county population has steadily increased from 23,950 in 1900 to 172,199 in 1960. According to the Census of Agriculture, the value of all farm products sold from Snohomish County farms has increased greatly since 1940 when it was reported at \$3,994,238 to \$11,218,642 in 1949 and \$15,687,935 in 1959.

Numerous private and public organizations have promoted, guided and served the farming industry of Snohomish County. Climate, soil and location favorable to agriculture have attracted investment in processing and marketing facilities for dairy and poultry products and specialty crops. These investments have made Everett, Snohomish, Arlington, Monroe, Stanwood and East Stanwood important food processing centers. A close relationship between processors and farmers has greatly advanced the area's specialized farming. Of no little importance in the advancement of Snohomish County agriculture has been the work of the Experiment stations. Successful varieties of plants and seeds and methods of animal husbandry have been demonstrated to many farmers by Experiment stations in western Washington at Mount Vernon and Puyallup.